

# What It Is

Mark Knopfler

The drinking dens are spilling out  
There's staggering in the square  
There's lads and lasses falling about  
And a crackling in the air  
Down around the dungeon doors  
The shelters and the queues  
Everybody's looking for  
Somebody's arms to fall into  
That's what it is  
It's what it is now

There's frost on the graves and the monuments  
But the taverns are warm in town  
People curse the government  
And shovel hot food down  
Lights are out in the city hall  
The castle and the keep  
The moon shines down upon it all  
The legless and asleep

And it's cold on the tollgate  
With the wagons creeping through  
Cold on the tollgate  
God knows what I could do with you  
That's what it is  
It's what it is now

The garrison sleeps in the citadel  
With the ghosts and the ancient stones

High up on the parapet  
A Scottish piper stands alone  
And high on the wind  
The highland drums begin to roll  
And something from the past just comes  
And stares into my soul

And it's cold on the tollgate  
Let the drums beat the tatoo  
Cold on the tollgate  
God knows what I could do with you  
That's what it is  
It's what it is now  
What it is  
It's what it is now

There's a chink of light, there's a burning wick  
There's a lantern in the tower  
Wee Willie Winkie with a candlestick  
Still writing songs in the wee wee hours  
On Charlotte Street I take  
A walking stick from my hotel  
The ghost of Dirty Dick  
Is still in search of Little Nell  
That's what it is  
It's what it is now  
It's what it is

What it is now